A RELATION

OF THE

DISTRESSED STATE

OF THE

CHURCH of CHRIST,

PROFESSING

The *Protestant* Religion in the Great *Dukedom* of *LITHUANIA*,

Presented to the view of all Compassionate Christians.

PSAL. XLI. 1, 2.

Blessed is he that considereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the Earth, and thou wilt not deliver him into the Will of his Enemies.

LAMENT. III. 52, 53, 54.

Mine Enemies chased me sore like a Bird, without cause: They have cut off my life in the Dungeon, and cast a Stone upon me. Waters flowed over mine Head, then I said, I am cut off.

LONDON,

Printed in the Year of our Salvation 1662.

Lament. I. 16.

For these things I weep ; mine Eye, mine Eye runneth down with water ; because the Comforter, *that should relieve my Soul, is far from me : my* Children *are desolate ; because the Enemy prevailed.*

They have heard, that I sigh, there is none to comfort me : all mine Enemies *have heard of my trouble, and they are glad,* &c. Ibid. *v.* 21.

A Relation *of the Diſtreſſed State of the* Church *of* Chriſt, *profeſsing the* Proteſtant *Religion in the Great* Dukedom *of* Lithuania;

Preſented to the view of all Compaſſionate Chriſtians.

THE fatal and Bloody *Tragedy*, which, with a great deal of Confuſion, hath been acted on the *Theatre* of *Europe*, near upon fourty years, or upwards, having daſhed moſt potent *Kingdoms*, *Nations*, and *Provinces*, one againſt another, hath at laſt (with more Severity, becauſe *later*) reached our *Sarmatian* Climate, and therein that moſt flouriſhing Kingdom of *Poland*, but eſpecially the Great *Dukedom* of *Lithuania*, and the *Provinces* belonging thereunto; wherein it hath ſo ruined, and deſtroyed many magnificent, and populous *Cities*, leſſer *Towns*, and *Villages* without number; that there are not ſo much, as any Marks left, where they ſtood before.

This is now the twelfth year, ſince the higheſt, and *moſt righteous Judg* of all *unrighteous Nations*, having baniſhed Peace from our Countrey, hath, in his fierce anger, called for many perfidious, cruel, ſwift, and mighty *Nations*, to execute his Judgments againſt us. And theſe, not having been in the leaſt provoked by Us, but onely thirſting after our *Fortunes*, and *Blood*, have waſhed their cruel hands therein, and are not ſatisfied therewith, but to the ſpoiling of the Goods have added moſt exquiſite Torments upon the *Bodies* of the true *Profeſſours* of *Chriſtianity*.

In the Year 1648. when the firſt *Rebellion* of the *Coſſacks* broke forth, to whom the *Tartarians* readily did aſſociate themſelves, the *Nobility* was ſought out, with much diligence, by the furious *Rebels*, to be ſlaughtered; and all ſuch, as were not of the *Greek Religion*, were moſt ignominiouſly put to death, without any diſtinction; where were many numerous *Congregations*

of the *Reformed Protestants*, whose *Ministers* were not spared also.

And the *Cruelty* of the furious *Cossacks* was so barbarous, that the *Tartars* themselves (though their *Associates*) would not be guilty of so much Innocent Blood; but compassionately did rescue as many, as they could, out of their hands.

Many had their *Skins* pulled over their *Ears*, whilest they were *alive*. Others had their *Hands*, and *Feet*, cut off. Some had their *Bowels* taken out, alive. Others had their *Shin-bones* bored thorough. To some they poured *melted Lead* in at the *Wounds*, which they made in their *Heads*, or *Bodies*. Their *Eyes* were plucked out: there is no number of those, that were *hanged*. And it was accounted a *great Mercy*, if any had his *Head* cut off with a *Sword*, or if they were sent away as *perpetual Slaves* to the *Turk*. Poor *Parents*, and *Husbands*, were forced to look on, whilest their *Wives*, and *Daughters* were ravished.

This was the miserable Condition of our *Country*, and *Church*, for several years together, during the *Civil Wars*. But afterwards, when we all begun to hope for *better* things, there fell a *new*, and more strange Calamity upon us, when we were almost consumed before. For the perfidious *Moscovite*, having taken notice of the distraction, and devastation, which by the just Hand of *God* befell us; and that the strength of *Lithuania* was, by continual *Intestine Wars*, decayed, he presently took an opportunity to invade it; and, to that effect, having found out some *Pretenses*, he came with an *Army* of two hundred thousand men, and associated to himself sixty thousand of the Rebellious *Cossacks*; who carried all before them, like a *Flood*, spoiling, burning, destroying all, that they met with, sacking the *strong Holds*, and *Cities*, not leaving one Corner in all *Lithuania* unsearched. Never was greater *Tyrannie* committed in those Parts before. There was no regard of *Tears*, and *Lamentations*: no Pity shewed to yielding Persons: all, without discretion, were cut to pieces. The *common Multitude* were slaughtered out of hand; but the *Gentry*, and *Nobility* were carried away; and, upon deliberation, were either *hanged*, or *burnt alive*. Every Corner being filled with *Massacres*, made the Blood run, like *Streams*, through the *Streets* of Towns, and Cities.

But the Condition of the *Ministers* of *Christ* was most miserable

ple; for as many, as were taken, were, with [illegible]
ments, put to several kinds of death.

Adrian Chylinsky, a man most conspicuous both for his *old Age*, as also for his *Piety*, and *Learning*, whereby he deserved eminently of the *Church* of *Christ*, being surprised at his own house, had his *Hands*, and *Legs*, tyed together, and then *rosted alive*, leisurely by degrees, there being but some *Chips*, and *Straw*, gathered about him. Two of the same *Name*, a *Father*, and a *Son*, called *Smolsky*, both *Ministers* of *Christ*, near *Vilna*, the chiefest City in *Lithuania*, had their *Heads* most cruelly sawed off with a *Sickle*. Another *Minister*, in a Town called *Holowczyn*, whose Name was *Slawinskie*, had a *new* Torment put upon him: for they cut him by pieces, so long, as he lived. Many other *Ministers* were amongst the high *Mountains* exposed bound, and naked, to the *Snow*, and extream cold *Air*; which made their noble Souls forsake their miserable *Tabernacles*. And by this kind of death, this last *Winter*, there were destroyed above fifteen hundred innocent Souls; who, seeking for shelter, were in their *flight* over-taken. Those, that were most *healthy*, or *strong*, were sent away to be made *Slaves*; but others were either flay'd alive, or cut into pieces. The number of those, that were thus miserably put to death, as also the several kinds of *Torments*, which poor innocent Creatures were put to, no *History* can describe.

In this *Juncture* of *Affairs*, all the *Ministers* of *Christ* were forced to forsake their *Dwelling-places*. And there is above fourty, of whom it is not known, what kind of death they suffered: but that they are dead, is certain; because they are not found, nor were they carried into *Captivity*. The *Churches*, for the most part, as far as the *Enemy* could reach, were destroyed by *Fire*: All the *Bells* were carried away; so that there are but few left in the whole *Dukedom*. The *desolate Fields*, and *Water* onely were left, as Witnesses of the insolency of a *barbarous Enemy*; for all *Dwelling-places*, and *Woods* were pulled, and cut down, and burnt to Ashes.

One would think, that the Land had been by this time chastised sufficiently, and that the sharp Rod of our Correction should have been broken: but God was not yet pleased to put a period to our Calamities; for every year our Countrey had a *New Ene-*

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by raised upon it, and so that little, which the *former* had left, the *succeeding* Enemy devoured: For, in the year 1655. the Multitude of our *Enemies* was augmented, by the coming of the *Swede*: whose Armies, by reason of the vicinity of these three *Provinces*, *Borussia*, *Curland*, and *Liefland*, which they had in their power, have, for the space of five years, afflicted our Countrey also. And, without any respect of the *Protestant Religion*, they used us as *Enemies*: and, by their coming into the Countrey, they made us lyable to be more hated by those of the *Roman Religion*, then before; although after that all the *Polish Armies* had forsaken their *King*, and that His *Sacred Royal Majesty* had with-drawn himself out of His *Kingdom*, by reason of the Power of the *Enemies*, who pressed all places, and being absent for a very long time in *Silesia*, yet the *Lithuanian Churches*, all that time, remained still constant, and faithful to their *Gracious King*.

All this came upon us, undoubtedly, because of the *Sins* of our Country: yet the *Wrath* of God did still burn against us; for, a little while after, He did send *another* Enemy, out of *another Corner*, to wit, the *Prince* of *Transylvania*; in whose *Army*, besides the *Hungarians*, and *Transylvanians*, there were *Moldavians*, *Valachians*, *Servians*, and other *Eastern* Barbarous *Nations*, who came with great hopes, that they should be enriched with our *Fortunes*, and *Goods*.

This brought a new Calamity upon that, which remained; for they made *havock* of all, wasted, and destroyed all *without distinction*. The *Churches*, that remained, they robbed; the *Houses* rifled, and burnt; the *People* driven into *Banishment*; and those, that could not fly, were *murthered*.

It cannot be sufficiently lamented, much less uttered, what in such long continuance of our *Troubles*, amongst so many *Eastern*, *Western*, *Northern*, and other *Enemies*, our *Native Country*, the *Church*, and every *Member* thereof, have suffered. The *dead*, and the *unborn*, were then accounted blessed: the *weaker Sex* was reputed as the most Infortunate; For we have seen many *Illustrious*, and *Noble Families* so exhausted, and brought to extremitie; that they have not had *Bread* to eat. We have seen *Noble Men*, and *Matrons*, *Virgins*, and *Children* of great *Parentage*,

tage mancipated under the pleasure, and servitude of the *Muscovians*, *Tartarians*, *Cossacks*, and others; under which both they, and many *Ministers* of the *Gospel* to this day do groan heavily.

In consideration of those *Extremities*, which indeed are *extraordinary*, we cannot but adore the just *Judgements* of God thus poured upon us by reason of our *Sins*, and deplore our sad condition: and the more by reason of the small hopes of Restitution, or deliverance from such a Devastation. For, though we are brought very low already, having been made subject to many *Wastings*, great *Terrours*, and *Troubles*, as having had Death before our Eyes continually; yet there is still matter of new *Troubles* at home, especially to those, that desire to serve God in simplicity, and purity: to this particularly one Calamity followeth another, as the Waves, in a *tempestuous Sea*, come one upon another.

Our very *Neighbours* do hate, and persecute the *Remnant* of us still, with as much eagerness, as our *foreign Enemies* did: they deprive us of our *Churches* yet remaining: those *Lands*, which were given for the maintainance of *Ministers*, and *Scholes*, they give away, as if they had been their own: our *Ministers* are banished; and such, as remain are beaten, and misused: the Threatnings of our *total Exilement* are encreased: In a word, all the *Reformed Protestans* are accounted as the *Off-scouring of the World*, and the original cause of all the *Troubles*, which are hitherto befallen to the Country. Hence it is, that they are hated, abused, threatned more and more: and whatsoever may be found *odious* amongst men, all that is put upon them, for to make their calamities the greater.

We do not question, but that all, that shall read, or hear of these things, and have the least *spark* of *Christian Charitie* left in their Hearts: or take to heart the *affliction* of *Joseph*, will take Compassion on us being affected with the truth of that *Worship*, *Doctrine*, and *Godliness*, which did shine amongst us, even in the midst of our *Troubles*.

For *our parts*, we have no other recourse, but to the *Goodness* of our *God*, and the *sympathie* of the *Members* of his *Church*; and therefore, following the *Practise* of the *Apostles* of *Christ*, and the

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Example of the *Churches* in the *Palatinate*, *Bohemia*, and others; which being in the same condition, some few years ago, implored the aid of their *fellow-Members* of the *Reformed-Protestant Church*, we do likewise make our recourse to your *Goodness*, and *Charitie*. For we are perswaded, that God hath in these Times made these *Kingdoms*, and *Churches* more happy, and flourishing, then others, that they might be a place for *refuge*, and a *Port* of *safety* for those, that suffer *Ship-wrack* for the *Name* of *Jesus* elsewhere.

Look therefore, we beseech you, upon us, as *Objects* of *Pitie*, and for the *Love of God*, for the *sacred bonds of unity* in *Christ Jesus*, stretch forth your hands, that the *Vine-yard* of the *Lord* may not be utterly destroyed. Send suitable comforts to those, that are comfortless; strengthen the hands of the *feeble*; support the *weak*, supply the wants of the *needy* with your *liberality*: not doubting, but that the *Lord*, who is the *rewarder of all good deeds*, and who takes all the works of *Charitie*, bestowed upon the *Members* of his *Militant Church*, as if they had been bestowed upon himself, will be your sufficient reward, and at the Great day of Accounts will put you in minde of such Works for your *eternal* comfort. These are the prayers, and desires of those; who, in the name of all the *Lithuanian Churches*, have sent their *Messenger* to you, who sollicits this in *their* Name, as having been an *Eye-witness*, in many places, of their distressed condition, and partaker of their Evils.

John de Kraino Krainski, Minister of God's Word, and the *Messenger* of the *Churches*.

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